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United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Information

Selected Speeches and News Releases

July 7 - July 14, 1989

IN THIS ISSUE:

News Releases—

USDA Announces Prevailing World Market Price for Upland Cotton

USDA Announces Marketing Year Penalty Rates for 1989-Crop Tobacco

USDA Issues Regulations for Importing Swine Semen from China

USDA to Assist Apple Industry

Heptachlor Surveillance Results Reveal No Residue Problems

Insects Control Aquatic Weeds in 30-Year Project

Scientists Step Up Fight Against Flies

Background—

USDA Assistance to Apple Industry

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MARCH 1991
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News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Information

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, July 6—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 7, through midnight Thursday, July 13.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1987 crop and 1988 crop base quality loan rates of 52.25 and 51.80 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate for 1987 crop and 1988 crop upland cotton during this period is equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Based on data for the week ending July 6, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

Northern Europe Price	78.68
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	11.89
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.00
Average U.S. location	0.42
Sum of Adjustments	<u>-14.31</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	64.37 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

Northern Europe Price	78.68
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	<u>-74.83</u>
	3.85
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton	<u>-4.15</u>
	0.30
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	0 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on July 13.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

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USDA ANNOUNCES MARKETING YEAR PENALTY RATES FOR 1989-CROP TOBACCO

WASHINGTON, July 7—Producers of tobacco with marketing quotas were reminded today by Keith Bjerke, administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service that marketing quota penalties apply when excess tobacco is marketed from a farm.

For flue-cured and burley tobacco, excess tobacco is that marketed in excess of 103 percent of the marketing quota that is assigned to the tobacco farm. For all other kinds of quota tobacco, producers are subject to penalties when the acreage planted to tobacco exceeds the allotment established for the farm.

Bjerke said the kinds of tobacco subject to marketing quotas are flue-cured, burley, fire-cured (type 21), fire-cured (types 22, 23 and 24), dark air-cured (types 35 and 36), Virginia sun-cured (type 37) cigar filler and binder (types 42, 43, 44, 53, 54 and 55) and Puerto Rican cigar-filler (type 46). Marketing quota penalties for a kind of tobacco are assessed at the rate of 75 percent of the average market price for that kind of tobacco for the immediately preceding market year.

Rates of penalty for the various kinds of tobacco for the 1989-1990 marketing year, which runs from July 1 through June 30 for flue-cured tobacco and Oct. 1 through Sept. 30 for all other kinds, are:

Tobacco chart follows

Kinds Of Tobacco	Penalty Per Pound
Flue-cured ,	\$1.21
Burley	1.21
Fire-cured (type 21)	1.11
Fire-cured (types 22, 23 and 24)	1.65
Dark air-cured (types 35 and 36)	1.22
Virginia sun-cured (type 37)	.93
Cigar-filler and binder (types 42, 43, 44, 53, 54 and 55)	.94
Puerto Rican cigar-filler (type 46)	(to be announced)
	Bruce Merkle (202) 447-6787
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USDA ISSUES REGULATIONS FOR IMPORTING SWINE SEMEN FROM CHINA

WASHINGTON, July 7—New regulations to ensure that swine semen imported from China does not introduce rinderpest, foot-and-mouth disease and other exotic diseases into the United States went into effect July 5, according to an official of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Under the new regulations, donor boars must be selected from farms used solely for swine breeding. The boars must originate in areas certified free of hog cholera, foot-and-mouth disease, swine vesicular disease, brucellosis, tuberculosis and pseudorabies. Before use as donors, boars must be isolated 60 days in a facility jointly approved by the People’s Republic of China and USDA, and they must be tested for evidence of disease.

“The new regulations amend basic rules governing semen imports since 1965,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “The objective today is the same as it was then. APHIS allows importations to proceed only if they can be accomplished without significant risk of introducing or spreading disease. The risks involved with swine semen from China are no greater than those tolerated for any imports under APHIS regulations from countries with animal diseases that APHIS is concerned about.”

Semen samples from donor boars must be collected and tested for disease agents. Each semen straw or ampule for export must be clearly identified and marked, and a USDA veterinarian must certify that USDA has supervised the collection, processing and storage of the semen until shipment directly to the United States. A USDA veterinarian must accompany all shipments except those going directly to the port of New York. Samples of each semen collection must be submitted to USDA's Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory for pathogen isolation tests.

If infection is found in any boars in isolation or in the semen samples, the semen will not be allowed to enter the United States.

The new regulations were officially proposed on March 28, and a public hearing on the topic was held June 6, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Suggestions in the 95 written comments received from the public were taken into account in writing the final version of the regulations which will be published in the July 11 Federal Register.

Wayne Baggett (301) 436-7279

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USDA TO ASSIST APPLE INDUSTRY

WASHINGTON, July 7—Kenneth C. Clayton, acting administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service, announced today that USDA will provide up to \$15 million in funds to help offset the effects of oversupply and low prices on the apple industry.

USDA statistics show that as of May 31, apple stocks were 53 percent greater than the previous three-year average. At the end of June, prices for many apples received by growers were \$3-\$4 per carton below the depressed prices of the previous season. "With sales continuing to lag, industry sources indicate that the situation is worsening," said Clayton.

In consultation with USDA, the apple industry will release apples from storage to those organizations requesting them. By removing apples from normal channels of trade, the apple market will be helped immediately and stocks should be cleared out before the beginning of the 1989 season, Clayton said.

Authority for USDA's assistance to imperiled growers rests in Section 32 of Public Law 74-320. Section 32 funds, which come from customs receipts, are traditionally utilized to correct market distortions due to

surplus agricultural commodities. In fiscal 1989, USDA is expected to purchase over 50 different type of commodities under Section 32 authority totaling approximately \$400 million.

Kelly Shipp (202) 447-4623

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HEPTACHLOR SURVEILLANCE RESULTS REVEAL NO RESIDUE PROBLEMS

WASHINGTON, July 10—After seven weeks of testing hogs and poultry in ten southern states, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service has found no evidence of heptachlor residues.

“As of today, we have sampled animals from more than 500 producers, and none show any presence of the pesticide heptachlor,” said Dr. Ronald J. Prucha, acting administrator of FSIS.

The sampling began on May 8 in Arkansas, after violative levels of heptachlor were found at a poultry plant in Batesville, Ark. In February and March, three swine in the Batesville area were found to have heptachlor residues, although only one had violative levels present. The action level for heptachlor in the fat of pork and poultry is any amount greater than 0.3 parts per million.

Testing began in the nine states surrounding Arkansas on May 22. Those states include: Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Illinois.

“We're very encouraged by the results so far,” said Prucha. “However, we plan to continue testing for at least the next few months.” He said that no decision to change testing plans would be made until more complete results are received.

A bi-weekly status report prepared by FSIS scientists showed that, since May 8, 262 poultry and 249 swine had been tested in the 10-state area.

Linda Russell (202) 447-9113

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INSECTS CONTROL AQUATIC WEEDS IN 30-YEAR PROJECT

WASHINGTON, July, 12—They are not weed whackers, but do a similar job. They are insects from around the world that feed on aquatic weeds.

Insects are getting increased use in states where weeds clog lakes, rivers and other waterways, said Ted Center, a specialist on weed-eating insects for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Insect control costs pennies compared with chemical control and mechanical cutting, “which is quite a bargain,” he said.

And, Center said, in some cases insects are covering more acreage and reducing chemical dependence to control alligatorweed, waterhyacinth, hydrilla and waterlettuce.

For example, Louisiana has cut herbicide application from approximately 15,000 gallons a year to 2,000 gallons a year to combat alligatorweed, said Donald Lee, assistant administrator of the Fresh Water Fish Division of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Entering the battle were the flea beetle, stem borer moth and thrips that USDA’s Agricultural Research Service found in South America.

Center, an ARS research entomologist, said in some areas weevils and moths now control waterhyacinth as good as two to three chemical applications a year that can cost as much as \$75 an acre or more for each application. Beetles and flies also are used to control water weeds.

These insects, known as biological controls, should provide continued control versus multiple herbicide applications, he said at the agency’s aquatic weed control research laboratory in Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

Insects may not totally eliminate these water pests, he said, but they will hinder an aquatic-weed baby boom. A river or lake, once infested, can be kept open for commercial traffic and recreation.

“Chemical controls are not permanent and, furthermore, some aquatic herbicides are no longer used and may not be replaced,” he said. “This makes it imperative that we develop environmentally safe alternatives.”

He said chemical companies have stopped manufacturing aquatic-weed herbicides because of reduced sales or they have been banned by the Environmental Protection Agency. At least seven herbicides for aquatic weeds have been taken from the market over the last 25 years. The EPA currently is considering whether to ban at least two aquatic weed control chemicals.

South America and other areas of the world have been the hunting grounds for 10 water weed-eating insects that agency scientists have turned over to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Over the last 30 years, ARS and the Corps have teamed up to unclog weeds from waterways in at least 10 states primarily in the Southeast, Center said. It's a cooperative venture that stretches from Texas to North Carolina and also includes California.

Center said ARS scientists, backed by funding from the Corps, trace the origin of various aquatic weeds, and then go to those countries and find insects feeding on the specific weed. Once the insects are deemed environmentally safe, they are released by the Corps.

ARS evaluates insect performance at select study sites. If they are effective, the Corps releases them broadly.

"Our cooperation in the program with USDA is one of our top priorities," said Lewis Decell, manager of the Corps' environmental resources, research and assistance programs. "It is the only long-term control technology that we have."

Jeremy Craft, director of the Division of Resource Management of the Florida Department of Natural Resources, said biocontrols of alligatorweed, waterhyacinth and hydrilla are vital to the department's strategy to combat aquatic weeds.

"It's absolutely necessary because application of chemicals is a short-term solution," Craft said. "Even if chemicals are deemed safe, there is still non-target damage."

If a weed takes over a waterway, it can hurt a state's economy. On Orange and Lochloosa Lakes, two popular bass fishing sites in northern Florida, a University of Florida study estimates that approximately \$5.6 million a year spent by fishermen will be lost unless hydrilla is checked.

ARS and the Corps have released various aquatic weed controls:

- * In 1972 and 1974, respectively, two weevils—*Neochetina eichhorniae* and *N. bruchi*—and in 1977, the pyralid moth to fight waterhyacinth;

- * the flea beetle in 1964, the stem borer moth in 1971 and thrips in 1967 to attack alligatorweed;

- * In 1977, the tuber weevil and India's leaf mining fly to regulate hydrilla. A leaf mining fly from Australia will be released this month;

- * In 1977, the South American waterlettuce weevil to control that weed;

* In 1985, the Chinese triploid grasscarp in a special project to control hydrilla in California.

ARS is studying other insects as potential biocontrols for hydrilla and waterlettuce, and looking for new chemicals and studying aquatic weed physiology at its labs in Fort Lauderdale, Davis, Calif.; and Prosser, Wash. A search for weed-eating insects is underway especially for hydrilla found in cooler climates, Eurasian watermilfoil and paper-bark tree, Center said.

“These invasive alien plant species are a form of environmental pollution,” Center said. “They impinge upon every aspect of water use and management.”

Bruce Kinzel (301) 344-2739

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SCIENTISTS STEP UP FIGHT AGAINST FLIES

WASHINGTON, July 13—No one's ever going to call them to the witness stand, but the “crimes” of the common fly are leading to lawsuits.

As housing and urban development edge closer to the nation's farms, farmers are being brought to court by their new neighbors. “Stop the flies,” say the neighbors.

Such legal battles are prompting scientists to step up their search for natural enemies and other nonchemical ways to combat flies.

“We've seen instances all over the country where urban encroachment in agricultural areas has caused problems for homeowners and agricultural producers,” said the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Ralph A. Bram.

Suburban American is absorbing land at the rate of 900,000 to 1.5 million acres a year. To newcomers, flies and odors from neighboring farms are not part of the idyllic country life, Bram said. He is national program leader for insects affecting man and animals in USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

“We have to learn how to increase nonchemical fly control and how to make the safe chemicals we have work better,” he said.

ARS scientists have four main targets:

* The stable fly, which has biting mouth parts and feeds on blood;

* The house fly, which secretes digestive enzymes onto its food, then sucks up both enzymes and food;

* The horn fly, which bothers only livestock on pastures and rangeland; and

* The face fly, also a pest of livestock, but an annoyance to homeowners in the fall.

Within ARS, four laboratories are studying ways for farmers and neighbors to resolve the fly problem. It goes beyond relying on screen doors, sprays and swatters.

Bram said the possible tactics include several nonchemical baits in traps that lure flies, natural predators such as wasps that prey on fly pupae, and natural organisms like fungi and bacteria that attack flies in cattle feedlots.

“We’re getting some natural control already or we’d be up to our ears in flies,” said Gustave D. Thomas, an entomologist and research leader at the agency’s Midwest Livestock Insects Research Laboratory at Lincoln, Neb.

“We have a program to determine what types of natural pathogens of flies we have in feedlots, such as fungi or bacteria, to see if we can grow those pathogens,” he said.

“We’ve recovered four or five that we’re working with right now,” he added. “And we have studies of other bugs out there because we may be able to use some of these against the flies.”

Stable flies and house flies from farms are the major problem species for homeowners, he said.

“In the United States, the stable fly is estimated to cost \$400 million annually in damage to cattle,” Thomas said. “It’s hard to put a dollar value on the damage caused by the house fly. But worldwide, this fly may rank in the top 10 insect problems because it can transmit a lot of diseases.”

Lincoln scientists are concentrating on stable and house fly problems at feedlots. One of the studies is using traps to learn how flies survive the winter and whether they may be migrating from the southern United States, Thomas said.

“We’re also doing aging studies of female flies to see how the population changes through the season,” he said. “If we can determine that the younger flies are moving from the feedlots to towns, we can use that information in designing the control.”

On Maryland farms, scientists from the ARS Livestock Insects Laboratory at Beltsville, Md., have been testing a mix of anti-fly weapons.

Farmers used bait traps, a parasitic wasp and pyrethrin as a space spray last summer. “We held down the house fly population significantly,” said Richard W. Miller, a laboratory scientist.

House flies and stable flies are also a hot topic at the Mosquito and Fly Research laboratory at Gainesville, Fla. “The work done here looks at stable fly dispersal—what distance they can fly,” said Donald R. Barnard, research leader. “They can move up to 135 miles.

“As for house flies, we’re looking at biological control with Hymenoptera, little wasps 1 to 1.5 millimeters long that sting the fly pupa and insert an egg that feeds on the pupa.”

Like the other labs, Gainesville is working on a computer model to predict what the fly population—in this case, house flies—would do under various conditions. “At this point, the model is in its early stages,” Barnard said.

“For the future, it will focus on what will happen if the farmer uses certain treatments,” he said. He added that the model’s accuracy then will be verified against what’s going on in nature.

Fly population models are focusing on the horn fly, strictly a problem for livestock, at the Biting Fly and Cattle Grub Research laboratory at Kerrville, Texas.

J. Allen Miller, a research engineer, said “it’s really a life cycle model for the horn fly.” It incorporates control information, he said, and state universities might someday have it on computers that farmers could access.

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

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Background

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Information

July 7, 1989

USDA ASSISTANCE TO APPLE INDUSTRY

—USDA, EPA and FDA in a March 16 statement said that the federal government believes that it is safe for Americans to eat apples.

—Due to public concern about the potential effects of apples treated with Alar, EPA decided to proceed with removing the chemical from use.

—Apple sales have plummeted. As of May 31, apple stocks were 53 percent greater than the previous three-year average.

—USDA intends to reimburse apple growers up to \$15 million (approximately 3 million bushels) for removal of apples from normal distribution channels because of a severe oversupply situation.

—Authority for diversion lies in Section 32, P.L. 74-320. Section 32 funds, which come from 30 percent of customs receipts, are traditionally used for food purchases.

—To receive financial assistance, apples must be moved for consumption outside normal channels of trade. Acceptable outlets for the diverted apples would include food banks or other outlets requesting the apples or identified by the industry in consultation with USDA.

—The goal is to have the surplus apple inventories reduced prior to the beginning of the Fall 1989 season.

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